

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF THE CLAIMS:

1. (Currently Amended) An electrical component comprising:
 - a base comprising:
 - ceramic layers, and
 - internal electrodes ~~among~~ at least some of the ceramic layers; and
 - an external electrode on a face of the base, the external electrode contacting at least some of the internal electrodes, the external electrode comprising a layer that has an indentation, wherein a thickness of the layer at the indentation is a at-least-one local minimum thickness.
2. (Previously Presented) The electrical component of claim 1, wherein the external electrode comprises areas having a layer thickness that is substantially constant.
3. (Previously Presented) The electrical component of claim 1, wherein the external electrode comprises copper.
4. (Previously Presented) The electrical component of claim 1, wherein the ceramic layers are piezoelectrically active.

5. (Currently Amended) The electrical component of claim 1, wherein the at least one local minimum layer of the external electrode comprises plural indentations, the plural indentations being disposed at an angle relative to the face of the base.

6. (Currently Amended) The electrical component of claim 1, wherein the at least one local minimum layer of the external electrode comprises plural indentations, the plural indentations being spaced apart from one another at substantially equal distances.

7. (Currently Amended) The electrical component of claim 1, wherein the at least one local minimum layer of the external electrode comprises plural indentations, the plural indentations being distributed substantially uniformly over the external electrode.

8. (Currently Amended) The electrical component of claim 1, wherein the at least one local minimum layer of the external electrode comprises plural indentations, the plural indentations forming a periodically recurring pattern.

9. (Currently Amended) The electrical component of claim 1, wherein the external electrode has a substantially constant layer thickness at areas other than the indentation at least one local minimum.

10. (Currently Amended) The electrical component of claim 9, wherein the at least one local minimum indentation has a maximum of 75% of the substantially constant layer thickness.

11. (Cancelled)

12. (Previously Presented) The electrical component of claim 1, wherein the external electrode is formed from a screen processing paste containing copper powder.

13. (Currently Amended) The electrical component of claim 1, wherein the at least one local minimum indentation has a width of at least 200 μ m.

14. (Currently Amended) A method for producing an electrical component, comprising:

producing a base, the base comprising:

ceramic layers, and

internal electrodes between among at least some of the ceramic layers, a face of the base comprising an external electrode that contacts at least some internal electrodes, the external electrode comprising a layer that has an indentation, wherein a thickness of the layer at the indentation is at least one having at least one local minimum thickness;

establishing contact between the external electrode and a contact element; and

exerting a shearing force between the external electrode and the face of the base containing the external electrode.

15. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 14, wherein the external electrode and the ceramic layers comprise materials with differing thermal expansion coefficients; and

wherein soldering is used to establish contact between the external electrode and the contact element.

16. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 15, wherein the external electrode comprises copper, the ceramic layers comprise a PZT ceramic, and the method further comprises:

attaching wires to the external electrode by soldering at a temperature that is greater than 200° C.

17. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 14, wherein the shearing force is exerted while contact is being established.

18. (Currently Amended) An electrical component comprising:
ceramic layers;
electrodes between among at least some of the ceramic layers, the ceramic layers and the electrode layers together forming a stack having a first surface and a second

surface, the electrode layers comprising alternating first electrodes and second electrodes, the first electrodes extending to the first surface but not to the second surface, the second electrodes extending to the second surface but not to the first surface; and

an external electrode on the first surface, the external electrode contacting the first electrodes, and the external electrode comprising a layer having one or more local minima indentations, wherein a thickness of the layer at an indentation is a local minimum thickness.

19. (Previously Presented) The electrical component of claim 18, wherein the stack comprises passive zones adjacent to the first surface and the second surface.

20. (Cancelled)

21. (Currently Amended) The electrical component of claim 18, wherein the one or more local minima comprise each of the one or more indentations in the layer comprising the external electrode is a local minimum thickness.

22. (Currently Amended) The electrical component of claim 21, wherein each of the one or more indentations are at least 25% less thick than a remainder of the layer comprising the external electrode.

23. (Previously Presented) The electrical component of claim 18, further

comprising one or more wires soldered to the external electrode.

24. (Currently Amended) The electrical component of claim 18, wherein the one or more indentations local minima form troughs that are at an angle relative to the first surface face of the stack.

25. (Currently Amended) The electrical component of claim 24, wherein the troughs form substantially regular patterns on the first surface face of the stack.